

CHRISTIANITY and CRISIS

A Christian Journal of Opinion

Triumph of a "Backward" Technology

The launching of two earth satellites, the second weighing a half-ton, proves that Russian technology and science are much further advanced than the Western world had assumed. The late Dr. Langmuir, head of the General Electric laboratories, after a trip to Russia in 1946, partially predicted what is now astounding the world. He reported that the natural sciences were far advanced in Russia but that technology was still somewhat backward. Evidently technology has also made great progress in the decade.

The launching of the satellites required a fire power which we do not possess in the same degree. It also required the most accurate mathematical calculations to determine at just what time the three stages of the rockets, or at least the second and third stages, must be released in order to overcome the earth's gravitational pull. The intricate instruments which recorded the breathing, pulse rate and other data about the live dog in the satellite represent a real scientific triumph. One can only blush when Western moralists send protests to Russia, after the manner of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, for they obviously lack a sense of proportion.

This spectacular achievement, announcing to us in a harmless way that Russia did indeed have an intercontinental missile, had the intended by-product of impressing the Asian and African world by proving that there was another gate to Western technology than the gate of Western culture. If one analyzes the Russian culture which made these recent technological triumphs possible, one must arrive at two conclusions.

One is that scientific achievement is not incompatible with despotism, as we had complacently assumed. Djilas, the heroic former vice-president of Yugoslavia who has now broken with Commu-

nism, has an interesting chapter on Communism and the intellectuals which throws some light on these scientific achievements. He declares that the class of oligarchs who rule the Communist state try to co-opt the intellectuals. They find greater difficulty with the artists and social scientists than with the pure scientists, for the latter are not politically minded and are apt to be so specialized that they are uncritical of any government which gives them scope for their work.

The Lysenko case in biology during the Stalin era has given the West a false opinion in regard to the freedom of science in the Soviets, particularly the freedom for any science which does not challenge the presuppositions of the regime. In addition, it must be observed that thousands of Russian youth, eager for an education, tend to major in the natural sciences, both because there is so little in the humanities to attract them and because the promised rewards are so great. Therefore, as one educator has pointed out, hundreds of students graduate from high school with a scientific discipline comparable to a second year M.I.T. student. Thus in the field of science and technics, Russia is a very formidable competitor to whom we have been too condescending.

To these Russian advantages in education must be added the willingness and ability of a dictatorship to appropriate money for research—something our leaders find incompatible with their hope of balancing the budget and cutting taxes. Professor Teller, the father of the hydrogen bomb, has ruefully observed that if the American people would only forego the expense of the annual automobile model, they would have enough for the outer space experiments. Of course no one can decide upon such an option, for we are involved in an economy which requires the annual model for its health.

Only a very resourceful democratic leader could persuade the people to make, in the interest of national security, choices comparable to those which the Soviet leaders can make without winking. This comparison can be made again in the area of foreign aid—where the President makes last ditch stands against an economy-minded Congress, while the Soviets spread foreign aid rather than revolution all over the non-technical world.

Clearly we are living in a day in which neither the Marxist nor the anti-Marxist slogans will serve as the fount of wisdom. R. N.

AN OLD RUT AND A NEW FEAR

THE FIRST complacent reactions in high places to the first sputnik were wrong and have been abandoned. We must act quickly to restore the military balance; this is a grim necessity for our own security and an obligation to the security of the free world. We should never have been so sure ourselves about the inevitable economic or technical superiority of our institutions.

It is right to emphasize the corrections of the original complacency. But is there not now a tendency to go much too far the other way? Are we not substituting panic for complacency? Here are some of the questions which need to be considered but which so far have been little discussed:

How far should we allow the technological race with Russia to determine the direction and the quality of American culture? Is American education to be shaped far more than it is now by natural science and technology? Much froth can doubtless be taken out of our education and solid science can be substituted for that, but will this new concern mean the greater eclipse of the humanities?

How sure are we that the uncommitted nations will be long attracted by a technology that is linked chiefly with missiles and adventures in outer space to the neglect of human needs on this planet? How can we avoid allowing the new determination to restore the military balance to cause us to exaggerate the place of military power in the "cold war"? Perhaps it does have a greater place than it had a short time ago because Communism as an ideology has grown weaker while Russia as a military power has grown stronger, but this new situation needs very careful evaluation. How can we avoid the stereotype of contrasting Russian methods with our freedom alone and not also with the just and humane goals of our type of society, how-

ever much we may deny them in practice?

There is no Christian shortcut to answers to those questions, and there is no Christian substitute for a military balance; but the times call for deep, prayerful consideration of these issues in the light of the Christian revelation concerning what is most important in human life. That there are no simple answers is no excuse for echoing the harried commentators and politicians who see only the problem that is before their eyes.

One may fear that twenty years from now something like this may prove to be true: Two giants in the world—Russia and the United States—have devoted their resources to this mad race. They have both survived but they have both forgotten the purposes of survival. They have become more and more alike with cultures dominated by the same technology, and the minds and spirits of their people have been greatly narrowed and impoverished. A few smaller nations that were not blessed with such wealth and power have been able to preserve elements of a humane culture; but these elements are as hard to find in one as in the other of the giants.

That may be a bad dream. There is surely a good chance that Russia may change again, that she may cease to be as great a threat because her leaders will be led to deal with the needs and desires of the people instead of with nuclear diplomacy or with the moon. Can we do nothing but wait for such a change? Or are there creative possibilities that are being missed now because our leaders know only an old rut and a new fear?

J.C.B.

"CONFOUND THEIR POLITICS, FRUSTRATE THEIR KNAVISH TRICKS"

GOD HAS not fulfilled the dominant desire of Marx and Lenin, though each enjoyed a partial and momentary triumph of the desire to dominate. Is it blasphemy, or merely diabolism, to ponder whether God more nearly fulfilled, or allowed fulfillment to, the coarser and more limited desire of Stalin?

Be that as it may, on this fortieth anniversary of the Russian revolution, when satellites of multiple dimensions process about the sun of power in the Kremlin, it is evident that God has not answered the non-communist's prayer, pre-existent in the words of the old hymn to the king, with the completeness wished by the petitioner. Could it

be that God is less simple than his creatures, and that he calls upon them to revise their prayers?

The Communists and some socialists have been grievously disappointed in their belief that essential evil could be labeled with a single name, "capitalism," and then could be exorcised by the formal abolition in Russia of that name. The problems of the economic power of man over men continue to plague them, and misdeeds of many sorts attest to universal human weakness. Similarly, Communists erroneously asserted that differing interest of urban and rural populations, of a ruling party and the body of the people, could be eliminated by defining them to be identical. This claim has been made good only in the totalitarian subjection of the whole of society to one authority in ideas and in policies: not harmony, but unanimity crushed flat.

The dream that workers would arise and fashion a society free, abundant, classless, has been denied by the cynical manipulation and coercion of workers, by the entire supremacy of politicians and bureaucrats, achieving a dominated society, scarce in shelter and sometimes in food and clothing. Verily, the prayer needs to be renewed, cleansed from the radical claim of one party to infallible wisdom, virtue and power.

For the illusions in the non-communist world, beginning with the United States, we are more immediately responsible. And we claim to be praying people. From 1917 until now, many of our people have been complacently certain that aggressive ungodliness destroys morality, while church membership and a modicum of religious instruction guarantee character. Yet it is at least arguable that private violence, crimes against the family, and gambling flourish more luxuriantly in our professedly Christian society than in Russia's ungodly one. Perhaps God isn't so readily satisfied with names and forms as we are.

We have assured ourselves that free men, defined so as to designate ourselves, can and will do everything better than men under Communism, "Tain't necessarily so." No such easy guarantee is supplied to us, nor is lax and imperfect freedom identical with Christian virtue, that dangerous but desirable commodity. Perhaps least Christian of all our attitudes, we have assumed that the pursuit of individual plenty is the true end of life, to which all other goods will be added.

Furthermore, with shadowy regard for consequences in human life, we have consigned to competitive profit-seeking the exploitation of the basic

needs, of the basic emotions, of science, of news, of recreation, and of much else. Sow by the billion, as we do in the picturing of crime and the stimulating of sex drives, and the harvest is sure. By comparison, in these areas Russia is decent, even sedate.

Do we Christians honor truth? Do we face reality, no matter how hard, or do we insist upon curtains of sentimental illusion, perhaps with religious tassels? Have we the will and the courage to devote ourselves as free men to community in the good life, with an earnest steadfastness surpassing that induced and compelled by the Communists for their system? If you're sure we have your prayer wouldn't be worth much whether *agin* them or for us. If you're really anxious, then we'd better pray and do together as we haven't done these forty years.

M.S.B.

AND NOW THERE IS ONE

WHILE SOME of our correspondents—supposedly privy to the secrets of the "enigma wrapped in mystery" which is Russia—were assuring us that Marshal Georgi K. Zhukov was really the top man who was only using Khrushchev, the startling news arrived that Zhukov, the war hero, had been cashiered by the all-powerful Central Committee and that now Khrushchev rules alone. Since "the Boss" reached his position with Zhukov's aid, this final step seemed very inconsiderate of him and perhaps dangerous—for who would now support Khrushchev against the inevitable conspiracies?

However, we were prepared to swallow our doubts whether anybody could be quite as clever and as cruel as Khrushchev seemed to be, when the French report of what happened came in. As it seems to make more sense than the American versions, we pass it along. Khrushchev, according to this version, was confronted by an understanding between high army officers, headed by Konev (who was probably actuated by jealousy), and Party leaders who were afraid that Zhukov was making the army into an independent center of power. Khrushchev tried to protect his friend, but he could not go too far without facing the charge of tolerating army independence against the cherished Leninist principle of the party monopoly of power. So "the Boss" had to yield. This interpretation seems more plausible than any other. But all interpretations reveal that Soviet politics is a rather desperate game, requiring quick thinking and a very latitudinarian conscience.

R.N.

The Vocation to Politics*

EUGENE J. McCARTHY

IN A DEMOCRACY every citizen possesses political power and therefore each citizen carries a corresponding responsibility. He is called, in a sense, to carry out these responsibilities. Not every citizen has a vocation to political office. The manner and measure of participation in politics varies from individual to individual and depends on personality as well as conditions of history, professional and family obligations, and other qualifying circumstances. There is no excuse for complete neutralism and detachment.

The Christian must assume his civic responsibilities as a citizen, and more particularly as a Christian citizen. He cannot, as Charles Williams, an Anglican writer, has pointed out, be indifferent to so important an area of conflict as that of politics, since politics is one of the areas in which the conflict between good and evil is waged, and great advantage is given to evil by neglect. Pope Pius XII has stated the same thought in more detail. The Christian citizen, he said, must be actively present in political life "wherever vital interests are at stake; where laws concerning the worship of God, marriage, the family, the schools, the social order are being deliberated . . ."

Man's Need of the State

The Christian who undertakes to fulfill his civic responsibilities needs to give some preliminary thought to the basic questions concerning the nature and functions of government. In this century, and more immediately in this generation, the power of the absolute state—ruthless, self-justifying, ignoring the rights of persons and of other institutions such as the family and the Church—has been forcefully demonstrated. We have learned a lesson which we should not soon forget. We have learned that we must at all times be alert to the danger of the intrusion of the state into areas of culture and into areas in the social and private life of man which are beyond the authority of the state. In our alertness and vigilance, however, we should not be led to accept unsound theories concerning the origin, nature, functions and purposes of the state. What is called for is careful examination, distinction and re-ordination.

American political thought has been strongly influenced by an erroneous, pessimistic concept of the nature and functions of the state. Thomas Paine gave the first native expression of this

viewpoint about the time that the Declaration of Independence was drawn. Then he wrote, "Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence. The palaces of kings are built upon the ruins of the bowers of Paradise." And again: "Were the impulses of conscience clearly and irresistibly obeyed, man would need no other law-giver." His thought is in the tradition of Hobbes, who held that man is driven by reckless pursuit of selfish interests and that government is simply a contractual substitute, a state of affairs in which man lives in continuous fear of attack and death. The state, according to this pessimistic theory, arises from the evil or depraved nature of man, and, moreover, this evil and depraved nature is the lasting justification of the state.

It is important to note that this unsound theory of the state has its theological element. The erroneous doctrine that original sin has utterly corrupted human nature buttresses the false philosophical concept.

Of course, the state does have a function which is the result of the disorder in human nature—the consequence of the fact of evil. The state must defend human society from the most concrete and obvious forms of evil or injustice. This social evil is expressed in three general forms or at three levels: at the international level, when one nation seeks to destroy or seriously interfere with the national independence of another; at the civil level, when some social class or institution violates the rights of persons or of other classes or institutions in society; and at the criminal level, when an individual openly rebels against the general order by committing crime.

But this negative, protective function is not the only justification for government, that is, for the state. It is not even the fundamental one. Man needs the state and this need is not the consequence of natural depravity, nor of the fall of Adam, or original sin. Neither does it depend on the relative goodness or badness of the mass of mankind at any particular period of history. Man's need for the state rests in his rational, social nature. This need would remain even though man had never fallen. It remains also for man redeemed by grace, for grace does not destroy nature or make essential social or political institutions, such as the family and the state, unnecessary. A society of saints, if they drove automobiles, would present

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Mr. McCarthy, an active Roman Catholic layman, is serving his fourth term as United States Representative for the Fourth District of Minnesota.

the problem of whether they should pass on the right or on the left side of the road.

In addition to this negative function of preventing and counteracting evil, the state has a positive function: namely, to assist man in the pursuit of happiness in the temporal order. This does not mean that the state is indifferent to the absolute, but simply that its immediate and direct purpose is the temporal good of man, the human good, that which is generally referred to as the common good.

This common good includes three principal categories of human good things:

First, those material goods which are necessary to maintain life and necessary as material helps to intellectual, moral and spiritual growth.

Second, those intellectual goods, the knowledge and culture of the mind, which liberate man from ignorance and false fear.

Third, moral goods, or moral goodness, the mastery of self, the possession of those virtues which in the limited order of temporal life are the highest goal—the good life described and sought after by the Greek philosophers.

Knowledge, Participation and Realism

Knowledge of political theory, in itself, is not enough. The Christian citizen must make application of his knowledge. He must participate in the political life of his community, province, state and nation. He should, in fulfillment of his minimum obligations, have some knowledge of major candidates and major issues, and he should vote in principal elections. Beyond this he must give consideration to participation in party politics, in campaigns and to holding party or government offices.

The Christian, in approaching politics, must remember that politics is part of a real world. He must be realistic, anticipating that in that world the simple choice between that which is altogether good and that which is altogether bad is seldom given. The ideal is seldom realized and often cannot be advocated. Trade, diplomatic relations and cooperation with nations whose conduct we condemn may be made necessary by circumstances. Political leaders may, in what Maritain describes as a regressive or barbarous society, have their freedom of choice reduced to the point where they must take a position which is questionable rather than the alternative which is simply and completely bad. Prudence may require the toleration of evil in order to prevent something worse. It may dictate a decision to let the cockle grow with the wheat.

Politicians are expected to compromise, yet they are ordinarily criticized for being compromisers. The writings of Machiavelli, together with all the associations that go with his name, have placed a burden upon politics and politicians. Compromise is the mark of human relations, not only in politics, but in almost every institution of social relationship involving two or more persons. Genuine compromise is not a violation of principle, not a compromise with principle, but with reality.

Lord Morley has well defined its nature. In his essay, "Compromise," he states that the interesting and basic question really involved in compromise is not one of principle against principle, but one that turns upon the placing of the boundary that divides wise suspense in forming opinions, wise reserve in expressing them, and wise tardiness in trying to realize them, from unavowed disingenuousness, from self-delusion, from voluntary dissimulation, ignorance and pusillanimity.

The fact that politics does involve difficult choices and compromises does not make it bad in itself. Thomas More, writing in *Utopia*, expressed the idea in these words: "If evil opinion and naughty persuasion cannot be utterly and altogether plucked out of their hearts; if you cannot, even as you would, remedy vices which habit and custom have confirmed, yet this is no cause or leaving and forsaking the Commonwealth."

A "Christian" Politics?

The Christian who turns to politics must be on guard against an error of another kind, the error of confusing politics and its secular contest and purposes with religion. There have been too many Christian political thinkers and leaders who have attempted to define and to realize what they considered to be the ideal Christian state. Some have seen the ideal in the medieval synthesis of State and Church and looked to the restoration of a similar order today. For others, the ideal Christian state is conceived as a monarchy with the Christian monarch defending both faith and country. Others envision the Christian state as a democracy founded upon the natural law.

If the concept of Christian politics is to be justified, or if any historical state is to merit the label "Christian," it must be of such kind that, as Franz Joseph Schöningh, editor of *Rochland*, points out in the April 1949 issue of that magazine, "fundamentally, through its Christian character alone, it differs from every other."

Neither history nor political theory establishes any basis for the application of the label "Christian" in any absolute sense to politics. Recognition

of Christianity by the state does not make the state itself "Christian," nor does official approval of certain forms and practices. Neither does the fact that all citizens of a state are Christians make that state a Christian state. A government might be distinguished as more or less Christian to the degree that it has either succeeded or failed in establishing a greater measure of justice; or, a form of government might be called Christian to the extent that it depends, as does democracy, upon the inspiration of the Gospels for its fulfillment. Such qualified application sets the limits of the use of the word "Christian."

Although the existence of a purely Christian politics cannot be established, there remains an obvious need for Christians in politics—that is, for Christian politicians, and it should be possible to distinguish these Christians in politics. If such distinction could not be made there would be no point in urging the participation of Christians in political life.

The Christian in Politics

What are the marks of a Christian politician—plain citizen or officeholder? He is not necessarily the one who is seen most often in public religious activities or regularly conferring with religious leaders. He need not be a "leading layman." He is not necessarily the one who first and most vociferously proclaims that his position is the Christian one, and who attempts to cover himself and his cause with whatever part of the divided garment is within his reach. He is not necessarily the one who makes of every cause a "crusade," presenting himself, as Carlyle described the crusader, as "the minister of God's justice, doing God's judgment on the enemies of God."

The Christian in politics should be judged by the standard of whether through his decisions and actions he had advanced the cause of justice and helped at least to achieve the highest degree of perfection possible in the temporal order. He should know and understand the great body of teachings on secular matters available to him and should seek to apply them.

When a political problem can be reduced to a simple question of feeding the hungry or of not feeding them; of ransoming the captive or of refusing to ransom him; of harboring the homeless, or of leaving him homeless—there should be no uncertainty as to the Christian position. Problems of overpopulation, or displaced and expelled people, of political refugees, and the like are in reality not always reducible to simple choices. As a gen-

eral rule the inclinations of the Christian should be to liberality. His mistakes and failures on problems of this kind should be the consequences of leniency rather than of fearful self-interest; of excess of trust, rather than of excessive doubt and anxiety.

The Christian politician should, of course, hold fast to the moral law, remembering that the precepts of morality do not themselves change, even though the way in which they are applied to concrete acts may be modified as society regresses or is perverted. On the basis of moral principles, he must strive to separate good from bad even though the line may be blurred or shifting.

He must remember and honor in action the rule that end does not justify the means. He should carefully avoid confusion such as that which is manifest in Cromwell's reply to Wharton's protest of Pride's Purge and the execution of the King: "It is easy to object to the glorious actings of God, if we look too much upon the instruments. Be not offended at the manner. Perhaps there was no other way left."

The Christian in politics should be distinguished by his alertness to protect and defend the rights of individuals, or religious or other institutions from violation by the state, by other institutions, or by persons. He should be the first to detect and oppose a truly totalitarian threat or movement and the last to label every proposal for social reform—totalitarian.

He should protect the name of Christ from abuse and profanation and should himself avoid unwarranted appeals to religion. He has a very special obligation to keep the things of God separate from those of Caesar.

The Christian in politics should shun the devices of the demagogue at all times, but especially when anxiety is great, when tension is high, when uncertainty prevails and emotion is in the ascendency. The Christian in politics should speak the truth. He should make his case in all honesty—aware that any other action is, as C. S. Lewis states, to offer to the Author of all truth the unclean sacrifice of a lie. He should not return calumny and slander in the same token, but combat them with truth and honesty, risking defeat for the sake of truth. He should not resort to the common practice of labelling, which by its falseness violates justice and by its indignity offends charity. Powerful personalities may be able to stand against these forces; the weak are likely to be destroyed. It is these who must be the concern of the Christians.

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DRAMA

TOBIAS AND THE ANGEL

Tobias and the Angel, as given by the Broadway Chapel Players, is an engaging comedy complete with an archangel with a keen sense of wit and a sharp ear for good grammar. It provokes some laughs and many a smile and chuckle. At the same time it makes a genuine contribution to the religious sensibilities, not so much by its moral lesson as by what it is.

The drama opened October 20 for an afternoon at the Phoenix Theater and is being given on Sunday afternoons through December 15 in the Broadway Tabernacle Church. Written by James Bridie, it is based on the apocryphal book of Tobit. Tobit is an elderly, blind Jew of Nineveh who lives in poverty because he has given his wealth to the poor. With him are Tobias, his son, and Anna, his wife.

Tobias is sent on a journey to collect an old debt. He is accompanied by the Archangel Raphael, disguised as a porter. Raphael is an amusing fellow, alternately self-effacing and domineering. He urges the timid Tobias into the arms of Sara, a handsome young lady who has been married seven times. Each time, a demon strangled her husband on the marriage bed.

Tobias marries her, and the father of the bride takes a shovel to dig his grave in the garden, muttering that soon there'll be no room left. But Raphael routs the demon and commands Sara to learn to love an ordinary fellow like Tobias. The trio return happily to the parental home in Nineveh, and old Tobit is duly rewarded for his charity and faithfulness to Jehovah. In short, the drama is a parable, done as a comedy, which says that imperfection must be accepted and the righteous will ultimately be rewarded. Triteness is avoided by the humor, the interplay of the comic and the reverent.

The stage is the chancel area, set simply with a small table, two chairs and a narrow platform before the slightly raised chancel. The players move freely here and in the aisles. Passage of the journey is indicated by Tobias and Raphael walking around in a stylized manner. When Tobias takes a swim, he jumps into the center aisle and thrashes about. Sometimes, a character will go "off-stage" by standing with his face to the wall.

While such staging may sound amateurish, the result is stunningly effective. Frequently, dramas on the commercial stage—"showcase" dramas, Thornton Wilder has called them—ask little of the imagination. Indeed, every aid of scenery and props may be used to reduce the need for a theatergoer to exercise his imagination, and the action all takes place in a boxed-in stage sharply separated from the audience. Its members are asked for little more than the "willing suspension of disbelief."

Tobias and the Angel requires a good deal more of the imagination. The audience must imagine the scenes—the garden, the desert, the brook—that the characters refer to. The line between the audience and stage is virtually erased, with the players moving freely about the chapel, involving the audience intimately in scene and action. In sum, the audience participates imaginatively in the play to a high degree. The difference between audience involvement here and in the "showcase" plays may only be a difference in degrees, but it is still important. In a sense, the audience in the chapel helps to create the play. (Of course, more is needed for this than just an absence of furniture.)

It is primarily through one's imaginative involvement, rather than in the explicit moral lessons, that a contribution is made to the religious sensibilities. The audience must not only suspend its disbelief in angels in order to watch one; it is also with the angel in an intimate way as he cocks an eyebrow at Tobias or calls the demon a stinker. The comedy accentuates this familiarity without unduly hampering one's imaginative involvement, for the Chapel Players usually stop short of slapstick, rendering the comic aspects as a somewhat enlarged mirror of human problems and absurdities. Divine guidance becomes commonplace, more believable because of some of its comic by-products.

This requirement of a high degree of imaginative involvement is an important characteristic of at least some plays in the religious drama movement as it has begun to develop in New York. What is true of *Tobias and the Angel* is even more true of *The Sign of Jonah* and *Christ in the Concrete City*. They are serious and far more penetrating than the above comedy, though neither lacks wit. Both minimize furniture and use the playing space in a fluid manner. Furthermore, both are radically different from the ordinary in their handling of time.

Time does not pass in the usual sense. It exists all together. The past and the present are juxtaposed. The moment is penetrated by eternity. Time is not something that happened back then, is happening now and will happen in the future. It is an eternal now, rendered dramatically more as a dimension in space. The audience is required to participate in this concept of time.

All these elements grow naturally from the dramas themselves and the requirements of staging. Together, they're like a breath of fresh air to the theatergoer nurtured on "showcase" plays.

Commercial theaters appear at least slightly interested. The Phoenix has scheduled a series of religious dramas to be presented on Sunday afternoons roughly two months apart, with "A Sleep of Prisoners" set for December 15. But it is significant nonetheless. Though the religious drama movement may have a good deal to learn from the commercial stage, it also has something to teach.

STANLEY ROWLAND, JR.

Mr. Rowland is a journalist who lives in New York and frequently writes on religious subjects.

THE VOCATION TO POLITICS

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The task of the politician is a humble one. His work is not at the level of the philosopher, the theologian or the moralist, but it is rather the more menial work of putting the determinations of the philosophers, the theologians and the moralists into effect. The politician, of course, should be a theologian, a philosopher and a moralist himself, and he should listen to the voice of these disciplines. As he proceeds in action, his general guide must be to make his decisions in the hope that, at least, if he cannot make an imperfect world somewhat more perfect, he can save it from becoming less perfect or finally from becoming entirely evil and perverted. He can try to prevent degradation, to prevent decline; and, if possible, he can hope to move things forward and upward toward right and justice. That is the purpose and the end of political action and of the compromises that go with such action.

These seem difficult standards and demands and their fulfillment requires sanctity. There is, however, no other measure which is valid for Christians in politics or for Christians in any other way of life. As the great politician and saint Thomas More observed: "It is not possible for all things to be well unless all men are good—which I think will not be this good many years."

YOU COULD GIVE A SPUTNIK FOR CHRISTMAS . . .

That's true. According to a current magazine, all the department stores are stocking li'l sputniks for the gift market. But why take a chance on being outdated? By Christmas, who knows what may be floating in outer space? That's why we suggest you give your friends a year's subscription to *Christianity and Crisis* . . . something that's up-to-date all the time. In addition to an issue every other week this year, your friends will also receive a copy of our new paperback, *What the Christian Hopes for in Society*.

All this for \$3.00. A handy shopping list is enclosed in this issue.

CORRESPONDENCE

No More Crusade 'Thoughts'

TO THE EDITORS: It is to be hoped that we will have no more "Thoughts on a Crusade" (Sept. 30) for some time. As a long time friend of *Christianity and Crisis* I have found myself in substantial agreement with the analysis of the short comings of the Graham campaign. But we have had enough. There is nothing particularly noble or heroic in this balcony conversation.

Let the next man who writes give us a vision of the alternative, a clear statement of objectives, followed by a formulation of a strategy to achieve the end in view. But to the accompaniment of this, may there also be evidence that the first concrete steps have been taken, as a kind of first fruits of the sacrifice and consecration necessary for the task.

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HAMILTON REPRINTS

Reprints of Dr. William Hamilton's article, "Moralism and Sex Ethics: A Defense," (Oct. 28) will soon be available. If you would like quantities of this article for distribution to youth groups, adult classes, etc., please place your order with this office as soon as possible. Single copies may also be obtained. Special rates will be offered for bulk orders.

CHRISTIANITY and CRISIS

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